

# **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA**

**Documentation of Conditions, Data,  
Reports and Plans**

**DECLARATORY RESOLUTION NO. 99-R-<sup>128</sup>~~127~~**

**October 6, 1999**

City of Indianapolis  
Division of Planning  
Department of Metropolitan Development

# MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

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The following items A through J , the appendices and the maps identified below constitute the Redevelopment Plan.

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## **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**

### **A.DESCRPTION OF PROJECT AREA**

#### **1.Boundaries of the Meridian II Redevelopment Area**

The Meridian II Redevelopment Area is located in the central part of the Regional Center (downtown area).

The Meridian II Redevelopment Area is bounded as shown on the Project Boundaries Map, Page 2.

The boundaries of the Meridian II Redevelopment Area are as follows:



A boundary line has been drawn which includes parcels 1028321, 1031639, 1042372, 1046858, 1063168, and 1099886 located in Center Township, Square 15 of the Original Plat of the City of Indianapolis and one-half of all adjacent right-of way.  
**SEE PROJECT BOUNDARIES Map, Page2.**

# The City of Indianapolis

## MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA



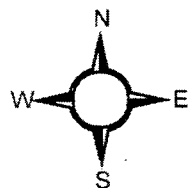
### PROJECT BOUNDARIES

-  BUILDINGS
-  PROJECT BOUNDARIES
- 0000000 PARCEL NUMBERS

50 0 50 Feet

September 24, 1999

Data Source: The City of Indianapolis  
Geographic Information Systems



## MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN

### A. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AREA

#### 2. Evidence of Blight

- a. Finding that the Meridian II Redevelopment Area has become blighted, deteriorated, or deteriorating to an extent that cannot be corrected by regulatory process or by the ordinary operations of private enterprise without resort to IC 36-7-15.1 and that the public health and welfare will be benefited by the redevelopment of the area under IC 36-7-15.1.
- b. Finding that the blighted, deteriorated, or deteriorating Meridian II Redevelopment Area is a detriment to the social or economic interests of the City and its inhabitants.
- c. Finding that it will be of public utility and benefit to redevelop the Meridian II Redevelopment Area. See attached **APPENDIX 1, LINK, SAVOY AND BLACHERNE APARTMENTS REUSE STUDY**, *Department of Metropolitan Development, August 25, 1997*.
- d. The above findings are supported by the conditions, data, and plans presented to the Metropolitan Development Commission which show deterioration, a lack of development, cessation of growth, and a character of occupancy that is inconsistent with the *Marion County Comprehensive Plan*.
- e. These historic buildings are in need of major reinvestment. The mechanical systems, elevators, kitchens, interior finishes, and fire egress provisions are deficient. The Plaza Garage shows signs of structural deterioration with spalling concrete and exposed reinforcing bars (See **APPENDIX 2**, pages 24-25). The license to operate the garage has not been issued and the other buildings are vacant. The sites of the Blacherne and Link-Savoy are too small to provide adequate onsite parking or outdoor recreation opportunities to their potential tenants.

## MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN

### A. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AREA

#### 3. Photographs



**The Blacherne  
402 N. Meridian St.**

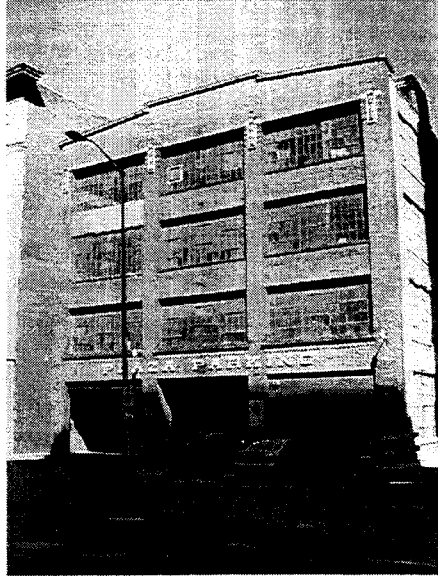


**The Blacherne  
from southeast**

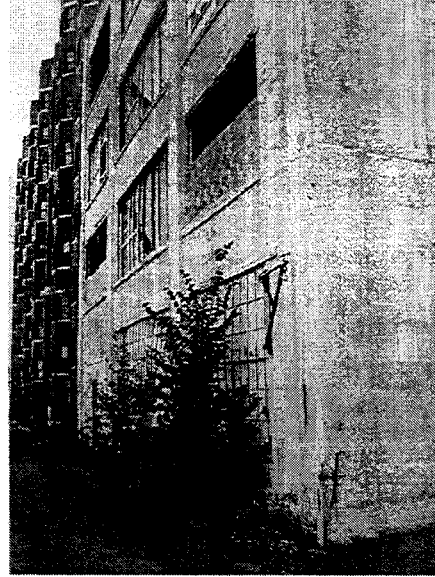
## MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN

### A. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AREA

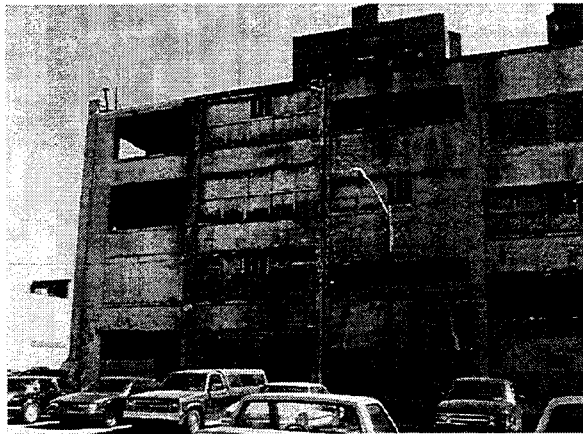
#### 3. Photographs (continued)



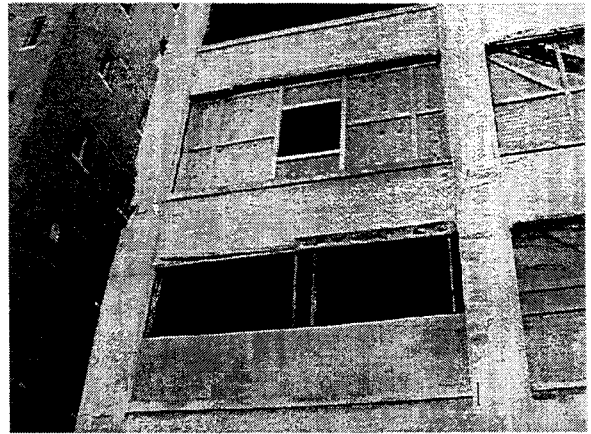
**Plaza Garage  
30 W. Vermont St.**



**Plaza Garage  
Deterioration**



**Plaza Garage  
Deterioration**

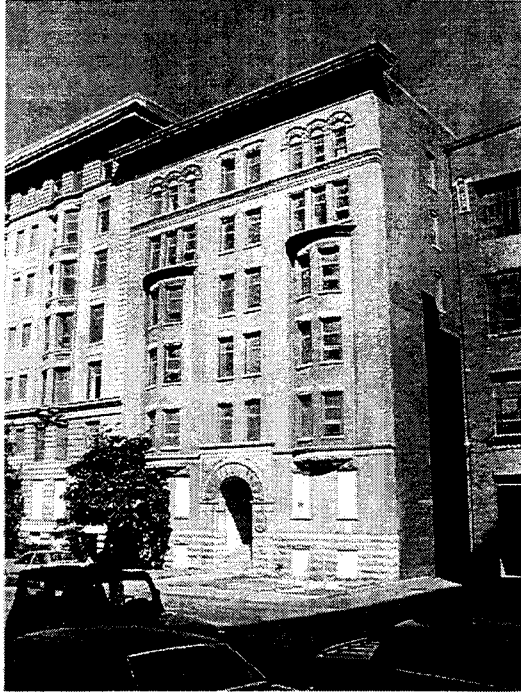


**Plaza Garage  
Deterioration**

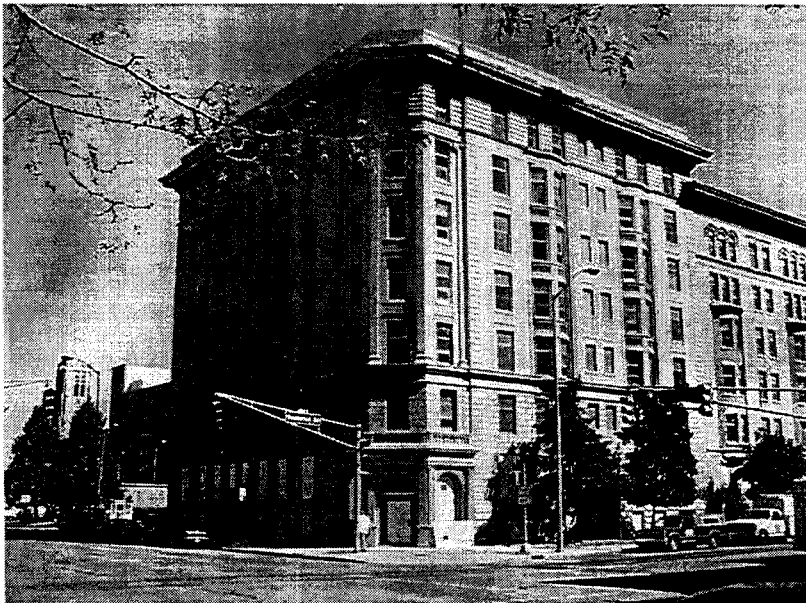
## MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN

### A. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AREA

#### 3. Photographs (continued)



**Savoy Apartments  
36 W. Vermont St.**



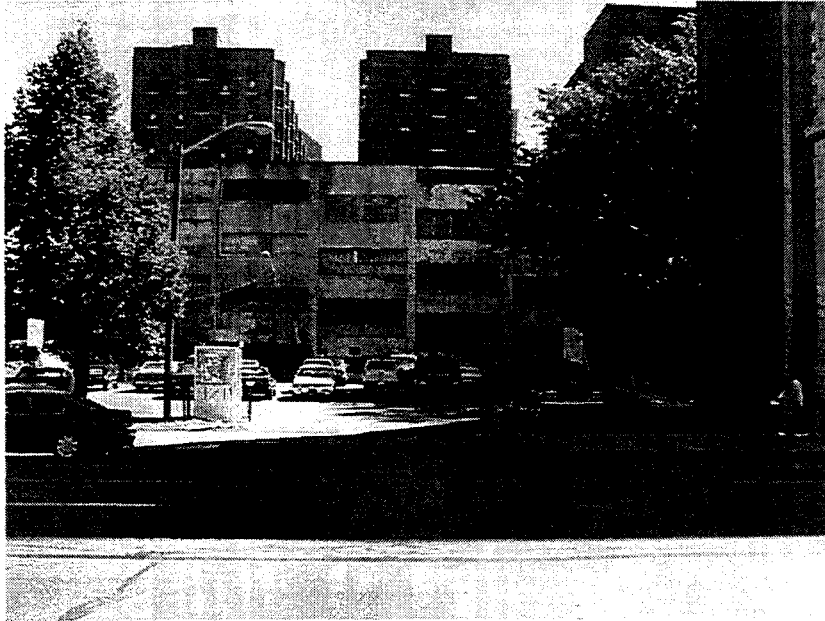
**Rink/Link Apartments  
401 N. Illinois St.**



## **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**

### **A. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AREA**

#### **2. Photographs (continued)**



**Parking Lot – 411-421 N. Illinois St.**



**Parking Lot – 411-421 N. Illinois St.**

## **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**

### **B. OBJECTIVES AND LAND USE PLAN**

#### **1. Redevelopment Plan Objectives**

Objectives of the Redevelopment Plan are to:

- a. Eliminate blighting, deteriorated, and deteriorating areas,
- b. Eliminate blighting, deteriorated, and deteriorating influences,
- c. Maximize new and existing opportunities for the development that is consistent with adopted plans for the area,
- d. Benefit the public health and welfare by stimulating an increase in the property tax base,
- e. Benefit the public health and welfare by protecting the economic value of surrounding properties,
- f. Encourage and stimulate economic development in the project area,
- g. Phase out incompatible structures and land uses,
- h. Redevelop parcels in accordance with the Meridian II Redevelopment Area Plan,
- i. Encourage redevelopment of the property, and
- j. Support and stimulate further growth of residential and commercial uses and other similar uses consistent with the Redevelopment Plan.

## **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**

### **B. OBJECTIVES AND LAND USE PLAN**

#### **2. Current Plans and Land Use Recommendations**

##### **PROPOSED LAND USE**

The proposed land use of the Meridian II Redevelopment Area is consistent with the Marion County Comprehensive Plan.

The Proposed Land Use is consistent with the adopted plan for the area (*Indianapolis Regional Center Plan 1990-2010*, 1991, Metropolitan Development Commission, Department of Metropolitan Development/Division of Planning)

The Regional Center Plan recommends Residential (50+ Dwelling Units Per Acre) for the property which represents the buildings when they were occupied. Residential (50+ Dwelling Units Per Acre) is defined in the Regional Center Plan as the following:

“High- and mid-rise apartments that typically would include garage parking and other on-site amenities. . . . street level retail sales and services such as restaurants, night clubs, gift shops, florists, and book stores should be a component of this category.”

##### **CURRENT ZONING**

Current primary zoning for the area is CBD-3, which is consistent with the proposed use.

##### **HISTORIC RESOURCES**

The following descriptions of the buildings in the Meridian II Redevelopment Area are excerpted from the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory, Center Township, Marion County Interim Report, July 1991. O = Outstanding, N = Notable and NR = National Register of Historic Places

**Entry 1510 Rated “O” The Blacherne**, 402 N. Meridian Street;  
Romanesque Revival, 1895;  
Architecture (296) NR

**Entry 1511 Rated “N” Plaza Garage**, 30. W Vermont Street;  
Twentieth Century Functional, c.1925;  
Transportation (296)

## **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**

### **B. OBJECTIVES AND LAND USE PLAN**

#### **2. Current Plans and Land Use Recommendations HISTORIC RESOURCES (Continued)**

**Entry 1512 Rated "O" Savoy Apartments**, 36 W. Vermont Street;  
Romanesque Revival, 1897-1898  
(Thomas Winterrowd, architect; Peter C.  
Weyenburg, builder); Architecture (296)

**Entry 1513 Rated "O" Rink/Link Apartments**, 401 N. Illinois Street;  
Second Renaissance Revival,  
1901; Architecture (296) NR

Outstanding "O" The "O" rating means that a property has enough historic or architectural significance that it is already listed or should be considered for individual listing, in the National Register of Historic Places.

Notable "N" The rating of "N" means that the property did not quite merit an "outstanding" rating, but still is above average in its importance. Further research or investigation may reveal that the property could be eligible for National Register listing.

## **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**

### **C. PROPOSED PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

#### **1. Land Assembly/Acquisition for Redevelopment.**

The Meridian II Redevelopment Area includes properties to be acquired. Those properties are identified on the Acquisition Area Map and Acquisition List. At the time additional real estate acquisition becomes necessary IC 36-7-15.1-10.5 will be followed.

#### **2. Land Disposition**

When land has been assembled, disposition documents will incorporate provisions for achieving development and design objectives with the Meridian II Redevelopment Area Plan objectives as criteria. The developers will be required by the contractual agreement to observe the Meridian II Redevelopment Area Plan objectives. The disposition documents shall be drawn up by the Department of Metropolitan Development.

#### **3. Zoning**

The Project Area is zoned CBD-3 which is consistent with the proposed land use.

#### **4. Project Improvements**

Infrastructure improvements, landscaping, parking areas and other improvements may be constructed by the City or the developer as needed subject to the availability of funds.

#### **5. Utilities**

All utilities in the area are adequate to serve the proposed development.

## **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**

### **D. ENFORCEMENT OF MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA OBJECTIVES**

- 1. The Metropolitan Development Commission hereby directs the Economic Development and Neighborhood Services Division to serve notice of the Meridian Redevelopment II Area Plan to all affected City boards, commissions, departments, divisions, agencies, or officers who are responsible for or involved with the issuance of permits, certificates, variances, planning, land use, tax allocation, or any other such items affecting the use or development of property within the Meridian II Redevelopment Area.**
- 2. The Economic Development and Neighborhood Services Division shall have the responsibility to review and approve any development activities listed above prior to the issuance of permits and certificates.**
- 3. The affected City boards, commissions, departments, divisions, agencies, bodies or officers of the City shall be notified that the Economic Development and Neighborhood Services Division shall have the responsibility to review and approve any use, plan, certificates or other device affecting the Redevelopment Area prior to the issuance of any permits or certificates.**
- 4. The Economic Development and Neighborhood Services Division may enlist the assistance of the Inspection Services Section to use its authority to either require remedial action or to stop construction not in compliance with the Redevelopment Plan.**
- 5. The Economic Development and Neighborhood Services Division is authorized to enter into a civil lawsuit to stop or rescind actions not in conformance with the Meridian II Redevelopment Area Plan or to enforce contractual agreements to ensure conformance with the Meridian II Redevelopment Area Plan.**

## **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**

### **E. RELATIONSHIP TO DEFINITE LOCAL OBJECTIVES**

1. The development of residential uses in the area furthers the objectives of the *Marion County Comprehensive Plan*.
2. The improvements within the project area will revitalize residential and commercial growth in this area of the City.
3. The provision of affordable housing opportunities will benefit the public health and welfare.
4. The revitalization and encouragement of the growth of residential uses within the project area will increase the property tax base.
5. The increased business activity will serve to protect the economic value of surrounding properties and maximize land uses.

### **F. REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**

For land acquired by the City for redevelopment, the Commission will either accept or reject a redevelopment proposal. In making its decision the Commission shall weigh the following factors:

1. The amount of the proposal in terms of dollars and cents.
2. The size and character of the improvements proposed to be made on the real estate.
3. The redevelopers schedule of work activities.
4. The redevelopers work performance record and ability to carry out the work activity schedule.
5. The redevelopers financial resources to ensure that the redevelopment will be carried out.
6. Whether the real estate, when improved, will be sold or rented; and the redeveloper's proposed sale or rental prices.
7. The compatibility of proposed redevelopment as it relates to the surrounding area.

## **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**

### **F. RELATIONSHIP TO DEFINITE LOCAL OBJECTIVES ( Continued)**

8. Any factors which will assure the Commission that the sale, if made, will further the execution of the Redevelopment Plan and best carry out the interest of the community both from the standpoint of human and economic welfare.

### **G. REDEVELOPER'S OBLIGATIONS**

1. All redevelopers, their successors, or assigns agree that there will be no discrimination against any person or group of persons on account of race, color, sex, national origin or ancestry in the sale, lease, sublease, transfer, use, occupancy, tenure or enjoyment of the premises therein conveyed.

2. That all proposals for redevelopment shall be submitted on the proposal forms supplied by the Commission.

### **H. PROCEDURES FOR CHANGES IN THE MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN.**

Any plan changes will be in accordance with appropriate state law.



## **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**

### **I. ACQUISITION LIST (See Acquisition Area Map, Page 17)**

**Address = 30 West Vermont Street**

**Parcel = 1031639**

**Owner = Plaza Partnership**

# The City of Indianapolis

## MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA



### ACQUISITION AREA



ACQUISITION AREA



BUILDINGS

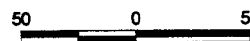


PROJECT BOUNDARIES

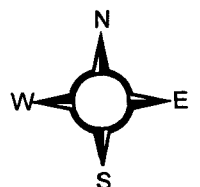
0000000

PARCEL NUMBERS

50 0 50 Feet



September 24, 1999



Data Source: The City of Indianapolis  
Geographic Information Systems

## **MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**

### **J. REDEVELOPMENT BUDGET**

The Redevelopment Budget for the Meridian II Redevelopment Area is estimated as follows:

Acquisition = \$350,000.00

Relocation = \$5,000.00

TOTAL = \$355,000.00

The Developer will invest approximately \$3,500,000.00.

## APPENDIX 1

### MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA

## LINK, SAVOY, AND BLACHERNE APARTMENTS REUSE STUDY



*Photo 1 - The Blacherne (Foreground), Savoy, and Hink Buildings in the Early Part of the Century  
Photo Taken by Bass Photo Co.*

**Background Information** - The purpose of this study is to examine reuse opportunities for three apartment buildings located in downtown Indianapolis. They are the Link (Hink) Apartments, 401 N. Illinois Street, the Savoy Apartments, 36 W. Vermont Street, and the Blacherne, 402 N. Meridian Street. They are now vacant and several reuse concepts are being examined.

Building	Approximate Number of Units	Approximate Square Feet
The Blacherne	90	89,100
Link	(Link and Savoy Combined) 88	39,700
Savoy	-	24,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>153,300</b>

**Building Conditions** - A recent examination of the exterior of the three apartment buildings shows that they are all in need of at least superficial repair. The soffits on the Link and the Savoy both need some work. There are large holes in the Savoy's soffit. Some of the brickwork at the top of the Blacherne is spalling. Repair or replacement of major components

of all three buildings, such as mechanical systems and windows, may have to be undertaken before they can be reused.



*Photo 2 - The Savoy  
Photo from Center Township, Marion  
County Interim Report, Indiana Historic  
Sites and Structures Inventory*

**Historic Information from *Center Township, Marion County Interim Report, Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory*, July 1991:**

The three apartment buildings are considered outstanding and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Information on individual buildings follows.

**The Blacherne**

- **Style** - Romanesque Revival
- **Year Built** - 1895
- **Historic Rating** - Outstanding, on the National Register of Historic Places

**Savoy Apartments**

- **Style** - Romanesque Revival
- **Year Built** - 1897-1898; Thomas Winterrowd, architect; Peter C. Weyenburg, builder.
- **Historic Rating** - Outstanding, on the National Register of Historic Places

**Link/Hink Apartments**

- **Style** - Second Renaissance Revival
- **Year Built** - 1901
- **Historic Rating** - Outstanding, on the National Register of Historic Places

**Historic Rating** - Outstanding. "Outstanding" means the property has enough historic or architectural significance that is already listed, or should be considered for individual listing, in the National Register of Historic Places. "Outstanding" resources can be of local, state, or national importance.

Of the three buildings, the Blacherne is the most famous. The following information is from *Indianapolis Architecture*, 1975.

The Blacherne was constructed and supervised by Henry Wallace, son of Indiana General Lew Wallace, who wrote the novel, *Ben Hur*. It is a seven-story brick building with rounded turrets at the southeast and southwest corners, and a heavy Romanesque arch and pillars over the main entrance. The name Blacherne, carved on the southeast turret, is derived from an Ottoman palace which General Lew Wallace admired while ambassador to

Constantinople. It was the city's first luxury high-rise apartment building, and early residents included Ovid Butler, Harriet Noble, and Staughton Fletcher, Jr.

Edward A. Leary, in *Indianapolis, the Story of a City*, states that Wallace invested the profits of the book *Ben Hur* in the construction of the Blacherne.

**Zoning** - All three buildings are zoned **CBD3**. This is an exclusive office and apartment district in the vicinity of the War Memorial Plaza.

**Parking** - The *Regional Center Parking Study 1996 Year-End Summary*, shows a surplus of parking spaces in the nineteen block, Northwest Quadrant of the Regional Center, which includes the block containing the three apartment buildings. There is a demand for **10,100** spaces and a supply of **10,900** spaces leaving a surplus of **800** spaces.

There are a number of surface parking lots in the vicinity and several public parking garages. The Plaza Garage, located between the Savoy and the Blacherne, contains 170 parking spaces. The Denison and Central Park garages are located in the block immediately to the south and contain a total of 1,704 parking spaces.

**Traffic Volumes** - Recent 24-hour traffic volumes on streets adjacent to the three buildings are: Vermont Street-**5,581** vehicles, Meridian Street-**15,785** vehicles, and Illinois Street-**19,993** vehicles.

**Most Current Plan Recommendation** - The *Indianapolis Regional Center Plan 1990-2010* recommends that the block containing the three apartment buildings be high-density mixed-use. A description of high-density mixed-use taken from the Plan follows.

This development pattern, typical of a primary Central Business District, is characterized by high floor area ratios (6:1 and above), headquarters locations, and its capacity to generate a tremendous degree of activity. To meet housing goals stated in the Plan, thirty percent of the development within this category should be housing. The following uses are integral components of this category.

**Theaters** (movie and live performance).

**Business services and professional offices** (non-industrial) such as architectural, law, and accounting; advertising, public relations, and employment agencies; and banking and insurance centers.

**Restaurants and night clubs.**

**Hotels.**

**Membership organizations** such as chambers of commerce, bar associations,

athletic associations, labor unions, alumni associations, and clubs.

**Personal services** such as barber and beauty shops, dry cleaners, and shoe repair shops.

**Public administration.**

**Repair service** (non-automotive) such as jewelry, watch and clock repair, key duplicating shops, typewriter, shoe, and camera repair.

**Retail** such as department stores, apparel and accessory stores, book stores, card shops, stationery, sporting goods, toy, hobby, and game stores.

**High-density housing** 27 + Dwelling Units per Acre (DUA).

**Garage parking.**

**Reasons for Reuse** - The three apartment buildings are attractive for reuse for the following reasons.

- **Prominent Location** - The buildings are convenient to jobs in downtown office buildings, educational opportunities at the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, recreation at the Athletic Club or the National Institute of Fitness and Sport, and shopping at both Lockerbie Marketplace and the Circle Center Mall. They are located on the War Memorial Mall, one of the downtown's premier open spaces.
- **Historic Character** - The Blacherne, Savoy, and Link have much exterior character and historic merit, making it important to preserve these buildings.
- **Building Grouping** - The buildings are in close proximity to one another allowing them to be redeveloped individually or as a group. The Plaza Garage is the only intervening building. By developing different uses in the individual buildings, a mixed use development could occur.

**Redevelopment Options** - It is strongly suggested that the three apartment buildings be reused as a group. The reasons for this are as follows.

- **The future of the three buildings is linked.** The buildings are vacant with their futures in doubt. They are in close proximity and are of a similar age. If one or more of the buildings fall into disrepair, it will have a detrimental effect on the others.

- **Joint development of the three buildings provides more options for reuse.** The combined building size of 153,300 square feet is an appropriate size for many reuse options.

**MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA - END OF APPENDIX 1**



## MERIDIAN II REDEVELOPMENT AREA - APPENDIX II

August 26, 1997

To John Merritt

From Adam Holman

Re 30 E. Vermont (Parking Garage)

I visited the above mentioned site on August 12, 1997 with Joan and Tim McMillin of H&H Corp. and Jim Andrews.

This structure has extremely deteriorated to the point where persons both inside and passing by is a hazard.

Exterior problems noted were large pieces of concrete, brick and miscellaneous pieces of glazing materials. These pieces have fallen to the ground around onto the three sides of the building onto the public alley. This has a great potential to hit a passer by walking by this structure. Some type of warning line should be established in order to make someone aware of the potential hazard above them.

Interior problems were as follows:

A great deal of schalling of the concrete is and has taken place, exposing the structural rebar. This could weaken the structural integrity of the building and should be investigated by a structural engineer.

There is only one stairway out of the upper floors of this building. This stairway is in an unsafe condition and would be unacceptable as an exit for this building. The handrails and guardrails are missing, loose and in some cases, in the way of exiting.

Exit signs are no longer operating and have fallen in many cases.

I see no reason the registration should be renewed or be permitted to be utilized for parking in this parking garage due to its deteriorated condition. It should only be considered after the exits have been corrected (stairway and exit signs) and the schalling of the concrete is being repaired in a safe and legal manor. The exterior should be secured immediately regardless of occupancy or not. If they do wish to occupy, the repairs should be in progress before they occupy.

September 23, 1999

To: Jim Andrews

From: Adam Holman

Re: 30 Vermont St / Parking Garage

An inspection was performed on September 21, 1999 with Zoning inspector Jeff Parmalee as requested for a follow up on a previous inspection.

There are three items raised in the previous report which remain, they are as follows:

- A.) Exit signs designed to be illuminated shall be maintained. Some of the exit lights are not in working condition
- B.) Primarily on the lower level, conductors (live or dead not determined) need to terminate in a junction box or be removed
- C.) Concrete schalling and reinforcement bars exposed and rusted still exist. As stated previously, a structural Engineer needs to be retained to evaluate the structure to determine the structural integrity of the building has not been compromised. This was done by American Consulting Engineers. Their report indicated inconclusive and recommends the building Owner contract with an Engineer to investigate this further. They could not state the building is not structurally effected by the lack of maintenance.

An issue previously cited relates to the glass windows falling out and onto the ally below. Work has been performed to remedy this issue, however the material utilized is not in compliance with current building rules.

The violation is as follows:

- a.) 1998 Indiana Building Code - Table 5-A ; Exterior walls are not permitted to be constructed of combustible construction. Wood has been utilized in place of the windows.